

## HSE wrong on bogus employment deaths

Construction union UCATT has accused the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) of failing to track accurately the deadly impact of bogus self-employment in the sector. It said the watchdog's failure became apparent during an evidence session of the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee last week. Committee member Tom Levitt MP said that despite the HSE having pledged in September 2007 to begin recording whether a fatally injured construction worker was working under the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS), that information was still not being properly processed. UCATT says workers on CIS have all the characteristics of an employee but none of the legal protections, and this amounts to "bogus" self-employment. HSE's chair Judith Hackitt and chief executive Geoffrey Podger gave evidence to the session. Mr Podger said: "In our perspective we have the data we need and we will act on it." However, MP Tom Levitt revealed that in recent answers to Freedom of Information requests submitted by UCATT, HSE said only four CIS construction workers were known to have been killed in 2008, with two other cases impossible to classify. The MP highlighted the case of 20-year-old Sonny Holland, killed in April 2008, whose CIS status was known but not recorded by HSE. UCATT general secretary Alan Ritchie said: "Every year many construction workers needlessly die because of the casualised nature of the industry. The HSE will never properly address the issue while they continue to take an ostrich like attitude to the problem and refuse to address the fact that the way the industry is organised leads to workers being killed and maimed." The union also expressed alarm at Mr Podger's "failure to rule out cuts" in HSE's construction coverage.

- [UCATT news release](#).